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Back Talk

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political and economic dominance, or, more accurately, continue its dominance.


JPB: Not necessarily, if you look carefully at what happened in the industrial period. It was the northern Europeans who had a syncretic time-based culture that was naturally conducive to allowing itself to be turned into machinery. If you are punctual by cultural nature you don't mind being an interchangeable part in a large organization. But most everybody else on the planet suffered because they had a completely different view of the nature of time. As we get deeper into the Information Age, time will be irrelevant.

ATG: Do you see a role for publishers in the Age of Information?

JPB: There is some role for publishers. I'm not saying they are going to go away. But what publishers continue to do is to put human thought in a physical format and ship it around in trucks to a place where it is put on a shelf where somebody buys it as if it were some kind of mercantile object. You don't need to do that anymore. It's now possible to take anything that a human

being can do with his or her mind and reproduce it infinitely and distribute it infinitely at zero cost. That is going to make for a big shift, so publishers will have to reexamine their role in the information age. I've talked to publishers about where their future lies. They aren't doomed. They just have to think a lot about what they do that is still going to be useful.

ATG: So how would you characterize the role of the librarian in all this? Should we be anxious or is it an exciting time to be a librarian.

JPB: Oh, definitely, yes...an exciting time because people are going to need librarians more than ever. In the future, people are going to have to use libraries more and more for economic reasons, not just for personal enrichment. Libraries are going to be much more central because people are going to be making money on the basis of what librarians can do for them. You are going to be essential to them. 

Ron Chepesiuk is Special Collections Librarian at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, SC. He is also the author of six books and 1,200 plus articles that have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Progressive*, *Modern Maturity*, *USA Today*, and more than 200 other publications.

Things That Keep Me Awake from page 42

will go on for some time, as there does not seem to be an answer in sight. Who is going to create and maintain the digital archives of the future? Are publishers going to do that? Would you trust us to do it? Elsevier recognizes that it's vital that an archive be maintained and will ensure that there is an appropriate archival home for our electronic material. Will we be the one to do that archive? I honestly don't know yet. Libraries...governments...it's not clear yet. It is expensive to archive and to continually refresh files as technologies change. How is it going to be paid for?

Once you even decide all of that, there are still issues relating to access to the archive — how can it be used? Publishers and librarians had some wonderful theological discussions last year as to whether things on paper could be scanned and put into a digital archive. And the publishers didn't have — surprising as it may seem — too much problem with the notion of scanning for preservation — so long as no one had access to it after it was scanned!

Not surprisingly, that notion didn't fly with librarians.

The other issue here is to ask what the definitive edition is, anyway. I said earlier that we're creating these non-printable items. There will be an increasing divergence between the paper and electronic versions of a journal. We have a new journal called *New Astronomy*. It's got video and it's wonderful. It comes out first electronically, then there will be a paper version, but they're not going to be the same, and that's true of other journals from other publishers.


12. Where Is the Money Going to Come From?

We can ask now the last question: where is the money going to come from? We know that budgets are more than strained. We also know what it costs on our side and it costs a lot to get this stuff up and ready for electronic access. There is so much more technically possible now than we have the money to do, so we're having to make choices all the time. And I mean the whole community. Which means we need to set priorities, and the process

of setting priorities is not clear to me. I don't think the dialog that needs to occur between the libraries, the agents and the publishers (and the students, faculty and administration) about where we should spend an increasingly finite set of dollars is taking place. How do we collectively decide on what is the highest priority? If there is a way we can do that, it desperately needs to go on, because each of us now is operating independently.

IN CONCLUSION....

So in the end what I worry about is: are we too early because we're building a very complicated system? Or are we too late because too much has already happened in other ways and maybe we're overbuilding? Are we simply misdirected? Or we doing things just about right and on the correct path? All of the above...none of the above...and then I get to the point I ask, what was the question again?

Which leads me to ask you to count with me. One sheep, two sheep, a third sheep — oops, here comes a goat, two cats, three donkeys and an elephant. Rats, I'm still wide awake. 

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Jack replied, "He hadn't been making all of his house payments on time. I just got the bank to threaten foreclosure and he was more than willing to take Angela's offer."

4. **The Plight of Libraries Programs.** "I thought I would save the best to the last, I just hired an old friend from the Firm. Got himself a nice job at Princeton to help libraries. He has given a bunch of papers and writes articles about the money problems facing libraries. He is going to get the college presidents' association to agree to a uniform percent of their total budgets so that libraries can get their periodicals budgets back where they need to be." And he added with

a smile, "back to where we think they should be."

Alfred was impressed, but asked "But what about Chuck? It won't take him long to get on to you and we can't afford to take any heat on any of this." Jack got more serious and said simply, "Chuck is out of hand, but you don't need to worry about him." Alfred motioned with his hand and the expression on his face that he had heard that before: "That is what you said when he was supposed to take early retirement." Jack replied, "The twit turned it down. He doesn't seem to have a life beyond the library." Alfred looked him in the eyes and said "Well, the problem is yours, take care of it before our next meeting."

(More in next year's ATG annual issue) 

Papa Lyman
from page 76

2, 1996, that Pearson may become a target of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation.

Now I'll return to the Putnam Group: One of its components, **Grosset and Dunlap**, G & D, as the company was known to the publishing and bookselling industry for years, was a prime publisher of reprints — notably series for young readers, among which was the bestselling Bobbsey Twins series for girls and the Bound to Win series, including Phil Hardy and Horatio Alger books, for boys. In my time at **Follett (Library) Book Company** we filled many pages of our "Guide to Good Reading" catalogs with Grosset's several series for young readers. I should add that every book in GTGR was approved by one or more state reading associations. This is to say nothing of Grosset's long list of reprinted adult books by popular bestselling authors such as **Pearl Buck**, whose original publisher was **John Day Co.** (one of whose founders was Richard Walsh, who was at one time married to Ms. Buck). The mention of John Day Co. leads directly to Putnam. When Melville Minton (whom I had the pleasure of knowing) took over G. P. Putnam's presidency, he merged it with his own firm, **Minton-Balch & Co.** Along with **Coward-McCann**, Minton-Balch and John Day Co. were very important parts of the Putnam enterprise. All of the above is written to focus on the ever-widening grasp on our industry by the Murdoch megaconglomerate. When one considers this phenomenon, one begins to be haunted with the suspicion that all archival material may wind up in some corporate paper shredder.

Abbeville Publishing Group. Although this company is scarcely twenty years old, it is one of the most important American art book publishers. It was founded by **Harry F. Abrams** after he had sold his namesake company to **Times Mirror**. Abbeville is now headed by **Robert E. Abrams**, son of


Abbeville's founder.

Allyn and Bacon, an important medium-sized textbook publisher, was at one time a part of **Prentice Hall**. I can't believe that there is not a large archival horde somewhere in Englewood, New Jersey, or maybe in New York City or Belmont, California. Prentice Hall, one of the most successful, dynamic and aggressive publishers of the twentieth century was founded in 1913 by two New York University professors who used their mothers' maiden names to form the company's name. Originally a textbook house, it eventually entered the trade field via self-help inspiration books by Norman Vincent Peale (*The Power of Positive Thinking*) and a steadily-increasing list of books to inspire self advancement. The company frequently founded spin-offs. (Some of these were: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., Kent Publishing Co., Prindle Weber & Schmidt and Wadsworth.) Rumors of consolidations — mergers with conglomerates and family disagreements (to use the mildest word I can apply here) kept the company frequently in the news until it was taken over by **Simon & Schuster** in 1984, which by that time was owned by Gulf + Western, and thereafter has been included in the S & S ownership meandering.

Addison-Wesley is another twentieth century Wunderkind American publisher which was founded in 1942 by **Lew Addison Cummings** and **Melbourne Wesley Cummings**. They were not related in spite of the not-too-common name. They also used their middle names for their enterprise. A-W is now merged with **Longman**, a British publishing, company which went under the name of Longmans-Green for over two centuries before the Pearson Group got control. Here again, we may see another change when, and if, **Thomson** gets a hand in Pearson. There has got to be much archival material about the rapid growth of Addison-Wesley as a leading college textbook publisher.

I remember Melville Cummings as being very interested in getting his high-level science books into retail stores. When I was at **Kroch's and Brentano's** in the 1950s, Mr. Cummings was among the first publishers to make concessions that helped get coverage in the general retail trade. As the name of Longmans-Green is mentioned another American publisher comes to mind: **David McKay Company**. Although its founder was born in Scotland, his company was a Philadelphia institution for years before moving to New York and merging with Longmans. McKay's early success was with Walt Whitman and Shakespeare. Then came Fodor's travel guides and Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders* and succeeding very successful titles. The Fodors were eventually taken over by Random House; Packard went to McGraw Hill.

Packard's only title now in print (according to *Books in Print*, 1995) is published by **Little Brown**, another very important publisher in America for over 150 years. LB over the years has published many bestselling trade books; famous novels by C. S. Forester, A. J. Cronin, J. P. Marquand plus works by top notch authors Alfred Kazin, Sir Osbert Sitwell, Walter Lippmann and many others. Little Brown is now a subsidiary of **Time, Inc.** which is (when last I looked) connected with movie maker **Warner**, which is connected with **Disney Press**, **Hyperion**, et al. I can only remark that this kind of conglomerating suggests that existing archival material should be searched out ASAP, collected and recorded, if there is ever to be a definitive record of book publishing in America's twentieth century.

History is, I believe, best written by those who live it. I hope Katina will let me continue my search for names of publishers whose data should be of great importance to scholars planning to research book publishing in America. With K.S. permission, this may be a series of several parts. 

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just successfully completed an experiment where we put out lists of these terms as documents that the search robots access. When they hit our term lists, they are automatically redirected to our journals. The mini traps redirect researchers to a specific journal and the macro traps redirect them back to one of our servers which then funnel them to our journals in general."

The expression on Alfred's face indicated his pleasure but he cynically asked, "How long do you think it will take people like Chuck to figure out that something is wrong?"

Jack replied quickly: "If we used it all the time maybe we would be in trouble, but we have two more techniques that we can alternatively use. The first one we're calling

Project Open Door. Whenever a searcher is directed to one of our URL's, instead of closing down the conduit every time a record is shipped over the Internet, our software automatically sends in five more records that share any of the same searching requirements. The researcher gets what he wants but it comes from our journals. The second one we're calling "Operation Trojan Horse. In this case, along with the cookie to report on what else the researcher is looking at, we also stick in some software that after closing off the conduit, it waits 30 seconds and then reopens the door and goes back to our server for some more of our articles." Jack then went on down the agenda with a number of brief reports.

2. Young Scholar's Research Program. "Junior faculty members, in subjects where Angela's data show little research activity, are being given free database searching and

document delivery accounts. They get the data they want, we get the readership we need and the libraries get the bill. We're even giving them some travel stipends so they can afford to attend their professional meetings to give papers. It's a win-win situation."

3. The Best E-journal Contest. Jack continued, "For the past five years we got this ALA subcommittee to sponsor a contest to pick the 10 best freebie e-journals. We gave them enough money to hire some of their members as consultants to act as judges. Once we get the winners, Angela's people give the best ones offers they can't refuse. Usually it doesn't take much. These freebie publishers are making peanuts."

Alfred interrupted, "I thought I heard that Angela had some trouble this past year with one publisher."

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by **Tony Ferguson** (Associate University Librarian, Columbia University)
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Alfred Von Neustadt should have felt elated in his new position. As President and CEO of the newly transformed Euroinformation Inc. (EI), he controlled a publishing empire of enormous proportions. Made up of the major British, Swiss, Dutch, and German scientific, technical and medical publishing companies whose scholarly print and digital periodicals accounted for 70% of most academic libraries' expenditures, as well as a variety of document delivery, cataloging outsourcing, and paper mills, he had libraries where he wanted them.

Yet, for Alfred, there was little to be happy about on this the first Saturday morning in January, 2002. As he waited for his first two visitors, he thought about what was known in the company as the "Chucky" problem. Chuck Baconer, and his growing group of followers, was costing EI significant sums of money and the momentum seemed to be growing. He felt that Angela and Jack's reports were not going to give him any reassurances that Chuck was being controlled.

Angela Pelligrini, like Alfred, had graduated from Stanford and they had been classmates at Columbia's Management School. Angela had made her way up the organiza-

tion ladder in the children's book division but was now EI's Vice President for Inter-Corporate Information Resources. Working with a team of computer programmers, statisticians and recently re-employed librarians, it was her job to gather reports from EI's openly and secretly owned companies to see if EI's journals were being read by America's students and faculty.

Each of EI's digital publishing houses could track how much each e-journal, article and author was read throughout the year. But it was the "cookies" downloaded with each issue of these e-journals which were reporting back some of the most interesting data on what was being read in competitor's journals and on Internet freebies. This covert data was further bolstered with information from the document delivery operations controlled or owned by EI. That is, except for one hold out, and even in that case, Angela regularly received reports from a "friend" in a Denver computing center.

As Angela settled into her chair, she got to the point quickly: "Overall, not much changed last year. Ninety percent of the articles published in our, or our competitors, journals were read less than two times

and 80% were not read at all."

While librarians knew that much of what they bought was not used intensively, they had continued to buy because research libraries were expected to collect as much information as possible. Yet, the size of the problem was becoming more evident. Whereas in the past, collecting use data was seen as too expensive, now the data seemed to flow effortlessly. Librarians, particularly Chuck and his group, were concluding that libraries were becoming repositories for vanity presses for which libraries paid the bill.

Angela also provided title cancellation data. With stagnant at best library materials budgets, libraries continued to cancel EI's journals. She noted, "Most of our titles lost 12% to 15% on cancellations and there doesn't seem to be an end in sight," adding "seventy-five percent of the newcomers attending the Charleston Conference's serials cutting workshop, cut our journals last year. Everyone seems to be canceling, but Chuck is totally out of control."

They discussed what titles should be discarded or acquired, how much to raise copyright clearance charges and how to better link the new digital titles to preexisting print titles in order to insure that corporate profits had a fair chance of improving over the course of the next 12 months. Alfred thanked her for her report and finished with a personal request that she rank America's universities in terms of their per capita faculty publishing ratios. They disagreed whether Alfred's son should avoid or apply to the top ten.

Jack Kim, Alfred's next appointment was a former CIA operative. When Jack entered the room, Alfred motioned him over to the conference table where they could look at the reports Jack was sure to bring. Jack surprised Alfred by starting out his report by saying, "Assuming we can take care of Baconer himself, I don't think we have anything to worry about." He then gave Alfred an agenda of the topics he wanted to cover and then began speaking:

1. Improved Indexing Programs. "As you know, since the Web searching programs are designed to prioritize the articles presented, based upon the number of times the searcher's keywords are used, we've found a way to conceal multiple subject terms in each record so that whenever that word is keyed in, our journal articles will appear on the top of the screen."

"But now we have developed what we're calling mini and macro thesaurus traps. Using logs of the past five years, we know what subject terms are the most frequently used for each major field of study. We've

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